

## Deshant Russell

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**From:** Jennifer Valentino-Rodriguez  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 13, 2022 8:52 PM  
**To:** Deshant Russell; Barry Berson; blmflddems65@yahoo.com; Byron Lester (2) ; Byron.Lester@ct.gov; Daniel Mara; Dwight H. Bolton Sr. (dwight@dh-bolton.com); Joyce Pickett (jtcaldwell118@gmail.com); Katie Blint (kblint@travelers.com); Kevin Hussain; michaeloliverlocal43@yahoo.com; Stephen Millette  
**Subject:** July 14, 2022-Concern and Testimony

Additional testimony for your consideration.

Deshant please add to the website at your earliest convenience.  
Thank you so much.

Best,  
Jen

**From:** garrett phelan <gjphelan@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 13, 2022 8:27 PM  
**To:** Jennifer Valentino-Rodriguez <jvalentino@bloomfieldct.org>  
**Subject:** Re: Follow-up--TPZ Emergency Mtg July 14, 2022-Concern and Testimony

Hi Jennifer,

I saw that the meeting is on for tomorrow night, Thursday 6/14/22. I reviewed the written testimony and the written testimony (continued) and did not see my submission I sent you earlier today. I am resending to make sure the TPZ gets this in time to review.

Could you please confirm that my previous email has been sent to TPZ or that this follow up email will be forwarded to members of the TPZ.

Thank you.  
Garrett

On Wed, Jul 13, 2022 at 3:37 PM garrett phelan <[gjphelan@gmail.com](mailto:gjphelan@gmail.com)> wrote:

Hello Jennifer,

I just opened my email and saw that there is an "emergency" hearing on the Agritourism text-amendment petition! When I tried to register just a few minutes ago I couldn't. Also, as far as I could see there was no revised text-amendment paperwork to read and respond to.

I'm not sure what the "emergency" is that this meeting has been called suddenly. We have been at this for months, why the rush now?

I am submitting my testimony now in case the meeting does occur, but I question whether the TPZmembers will be able to review all testimony in a thoughtful manner given the time constraints.

Thanks,

Garrett

**To: TPZ Emergency Hearing July 14, 2022. Town of Bloomfield**  
**From: Garrett & Jane Phelan, 37 High Hill Road, Bloomfield CT 06002**  
**Date: July 13, 2022**  
**Re: Proposed Amendment to Bloomfield Noise Ordinance as applied to Agritourism**

My wife and I are retired. I am 77 and she is 76. I was an educator for almost 40 years at the high school level. We moved back to CT from the Washington DC area seven years ago and we thought we found a beautiful quiet house to retire to in a quiet neighborhood in Bloomfield next to Auerfarm, a 4-H Farm supposedly dedicated to the education of children. What a shame. Our quality of life until the cease-and-desist order was anything but a "quality of life" existence.

Our property and house are the closest to what has been the events/activity site of Auerfarm. In fact our backyard abuts it. At times we have not been able to enjoy our decks to have a meal or visit with company. Other times we have not been able to sleep without earplugs. We could not only hear the loud music and pounding of the bass but could feel it reverberate through our bedroom. In fact, we have had, on occasion, overnight house guests leave because of the noise. Should anyone in Bloomfield have to live under these conditions?

When we can no longer manage by ourselves our property is our nest egg to be able to afford assisted living accommodations. If this text-amendment is passed as is it will devalue our property and impact greatly our lives. We could never have imagined something like this happening in Bloomfield.

I have written a volume of testimony on this issue. I'm not sure who has read it, if anyone, but I'll try/plead once more!

We are exhausted and confused by the length and flawed process of the Agritourism text-amendment petition. After months of numerous hearings, quickly and without much notice the noise suggestion was removed from the text-amendment and moved to a Town Council subcommittee. If not for our neighbor Seth Klein, we would not have even been aware of this sudden change from TPZ (after months of hearings) to have one of the biggest issues of the petition moved to the Town Council and rushed onto the schedule with little time for community input. When that hearing was held on Monday July 1, there was no copy submitted to the committee or to residents. The amendment was tabled. Now there has been an emergency TPZ hearing notification sent out on Wednesday July 13, 20022 for this emergencyscheduled hearing on July 14, 2022 even though the noise ordinance was tabled until August 8, 2022.

As of 11am, there was no update input from the town attorney or revision text amendment by the petitioner for the hearing. Residents are not able to deeply consider and have a timely response.. What's the "emergency?" the only one I can think of is the farm(s) want to rush this through because they want to get more events in this summer. I don't feel this is due diligence on the part of the town when considering this topic and some of the important issues that need to be worked through, especially how to mitigate the impact of the text-amendment on the quality of life of nearby neighbors

It is now 3pm on Wednesday July 13<sup>th</sup> that I am rushing to provide something to the TPZ no matter how flawed it might be because it is done last minute.

Below I have a recommendation, but I truly believe that given this flawed process the petition be denied and a vision for agritourism be created by the town with equal input by farms in an open and thoughtful process

In many way I think the Agritourism can be easily agreed upon with some compromise and a better articulated purpose and vision.

Auerfarm already is an Agritourism Farm in it's mission statement and parts of its section on farm history an its webpage. We might follow their lead on ways to articulate the concept of Agritourism. It sounds more like a farm inviting guests than an Entertainment Venue on located on a Farm. Hey, wasn't Woodstock a farm event!

## ***Auer Farm***

### ***Mission Statement***

***Inspire children and adults to engage in, learn about, and enjoy agriculture, science, and the natural environment.***

### ***FARM HISTORY (excerpts-parts in bold have been so marked by me)***

*Auerfarm is 120 acre non-profit educational farm located in Bloomfield, CT. It is adjacent to Auerfarm State Reserve and the MDC reservoir. **This huge expanse of preserved land brings with it unique wildlife and rare opportunities to explore nature in a densely populated region.***

*Located near the West Hartford and Simsbury borders of Bloomfield, and just 2 miles from Hartford, Auerfarm brings together students, parents, and guests in a region for learning, events and for recreation.*

*Students, adults and families come to the farm to learn about agriculture and the environment. Our programs all include hands-on interaction with natural materials to facilitate lifelong self-growth and education. **Our setting also lends itself to emotional healing and growth, as visitors experience the beauty of our trails, orchards, and animal pastures.***

*Auerfarm was gifted to the Connecticut 4-H Development Fund by the Koopman and Schiro families in the 1970s to be used as a community resource and for youth development.*

(This is the Auerfarm we knew and loved. But there are two Auerfarms-one with this wonderful vision and one that creates noise pollution, disturbs neighbors, wildlife and farm animals with loud events for hours.

There is a middle path that considers their neighbors and sustains the good work they do. We can have Agritourism and not have it “adversely affecting the enjoyment, usefulness and value of nearby properties.” There is no good reason to change the noise ordinance.

To be an Agritourism Farm is to be a good neighbor:

- Keep the present noise ordinance
- Locate farm outdoor amped/loud events at the least intrusive site from residential properties. Auerfarm has 120 acres why would it locate its event site right next to the closest residential neighbor?
- Limit number of outdoor amped/loud events to 6 for year (really a 7-8 month period). These events should be farm related fundraisers but are able to included amplified sound. Auerfarm already has such successful events and could add more.
- Use indoor facilities that are soundproofed for some of the events. This would include indoor/outdoor events where loud and amped sounds are indoors and other activities for the event are outdoors.

Most, if not all aspects of the text-amendment and the now proposed amendment to the Noise Ordinance, seem to adversely affect the residential neighbors and allows the farms to take no responsibility to be good neighbors. Is this really the direction Bloomfield wants to go? Does the town by its actions want to create adversarial relationships or encourage and support good neighbor relationships among all parts of the community?

Although I know this might not be the focus of this hearing, I strongly believe that the best place to create Agritourism in Bloomfield is in the POCD vision not in a text-amendment petition. This would offer Bloomfield a unique opportunity to be at the forefront of environmental consciousness while *protecting natural environments, farm properties and residential neighborhoods*. **I outlined my ideas around this concept in a previous testimony. I hope someone read it or will read it.**

Submitted by  
Garrett Phelan and Jane Phelan  
37 High Hill Road  
Bloomfield, CT 06002

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Garrett Phelan and Jane Phelan  
37 High Hill Road  
Bloomfield, CT 06002

## Deshant Russell

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**From:** Jennifer Valentino-Rodriguez  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 13, 2022 10:53 AM  
**To:** Laura Pallandre; Aaron Romano  
**Cc:** Deshant Russell  
**Subject:** RE: Expansion of farm activities to include agritourism.

Laura: Thank you. This will be added to the public testimony.

Deshant: Please add to the testimony and post to the website. I have hundreds of emails to sift through from the weekend so there may be more. I'll try to get through them as quickly as possible.

Jen

**From:** Laura Pallandre <lpallandre@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 13, 2022 10:41 AM  
**To:** Jennifer Valentino-Rodriguez <jvalentino@bloomfieldct.org>; Aaron Romano <romanofarms@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** Expansion of farm activities to include agritourism.

Hello,

I'm a resident of Bloomfield and I support this change to the zoning code. Given the current state of human affairs, I believe we need to do all we can to make local food production more financially viable, and if this helps then let's do it.

Warm regards,  
Laura Pallandre  
6 Nutmeg Lane

To: Town Planning and Zoning Commission, Town of Bloomfield

From: Seth and Melanie Klein, 35 High Hill Road, Bloomfield CT

Date: July 13, 2022

Re: Consideration of Proposed Agritourism Zoning Regulation Text Amendment at 7/14/22 Special Meeting

We strongly object to any substantive consideration of the proposed agritourism amendment at the July 14, 2022, special session.

As has repeatedly occurred throughout this process, a special session was scheduled (this time for tomorrow night, July 14) to allow an updated version of the proposed agritourism regulations incorporating, among other things, comments by town attorney Marc Needelman to be circulated to interested parties with time to review *before* the session.

Unfortunately, as has also repeatedly occurred throughout this process, town Planning & Zoning staff did not have time to complete revisions to the proposed amendment and send to the public or to the members of the TPZ for review sufficiently in advance of the session.

As a result, a draft of the proposed regulations has *not* been circulated as of today, a day before the scheduled special session. It is not clear to us what, if anything, will be available between now and tomorrow night, or what, if any, actions the TPZ will be asked to take. But in no event will we have enough time to meaningfully review any proposal.

Accordingly, we request that the TPZ again defer any consideration of the proposed regulations until such a time as town staff can provide an updated proposal, with at least *one week* for members of the public and the TPZ itself to review (and, in the case of the public, comment as warranted) before any substantive meeting takes place.

As an aside, town attorney Needelman previously noted that he is unfamiliar with *any* other instance in which a text amendment to a zoning regulation has been approved by application rather than through a full regulatory and committee process. The continued delays and adjournments over the past several months demonstrate the wisdom of this approach. This is a complex matter affecting many people's rights. Rather than accept this application, the TPZ should consider sending the matter of agritourism regulations to formal rulemaking, perhaps as part of the drafting of the town's new Plan of Conservation and Development.

Sincerely,  
Seth and Melanie Klein  
35 High Hill Road  
Bloomfield, CT 06002-2121  
[srk314@comcast.net](mailto:srk314@comcast.net)  
[melanie@mbdklein.com](mailto:melanie@mbdklein.com)

rec.  
7/13/22  
[Signature]

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July 5, 2022.

Ms. Jennifer Valentino-Rodriguez  
Director of Land Use, Planning and Zoning  
Town Plan and Zoning Commission  
Town of Bloomfield  
800 Bloomfield Ave.  
Bloomfield, Ct. 06002

Re: AgroTourism

Dear Ms. Valentino-Rodriguez:

I have been attending the TPZ sessions and am interested in the above matter, as I live in the High Hill neighborhood at 8 High Hill Rd. I have absolutely no objection to Agrotourism. The devil, as they say, is in the details. I offer the following thoughts:

1. In 7.4A, paragraph 4, while on street parking will not be a problem in our neighborhood, I suggest that it could be a big problem in other farm neighborhoods. I attended one function where there had to be twenty or thirty cars parked on the street across from people's homes. While I do not object totally to on street parking, I suggest that something more specific be in the regulation, such as, up to "x" number of cars permitted after provision for "y" number of cars parking provided on site; or, perhaps a requirement for on site parking for up to "x" of attendees.
2. In 7.4A, paragraph 5, there should be a time past when such lighting is not permitted, say perhaps 7p.m. In the fall. Winter and early spring months, a glare reaching adjacent homes, I believe, would not be welcome after that time.
3. In 7.4.B, paragraphs 5 (1) and (2), the number of events, tent sizes and months should be greatly reduced. I suggest that relatively permanent structures with more than one event per month would be an intrusion in the lives of adjacent property owners. Permitting Agrotourism should not be the same as establishing several areas in town for "Berlin Fair" or "Eastern States Exposition" primary event planning. Agrotourism should be an "add-on" for the farm enterprise and not the purpose of the premises.
4. In 7.4.C, paragraphs 2 (3) (4), it permits events to last until 9:30 to 10:00p.m. Again, events should be related to the principal purpose of farming and not for weddings, concerts etc. If it is permitted that clearly non-farming and purely entertainment events are to be permitted, then shut down time should be about 7p.m. during the week and perhaps 8p.m. on weekends, so as not to affect adjacent property owners' use and enjoyment of their properties.

The above comments are my own and not in any representative capacity. However, I ask that at least two public hearings be held to ascertain other views , specifically with notices of such hearings directed to potentially impacted neighborhood land owners. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Very truly yours,

  
Sydney T. Schulman

STS:eis

Cc: High Hill Neighborhood kAssociation